

PRESS RELEASE

CHILEAN NAVY TALL SHIP ESMERALDA VISITS NORFOLK

As part of the itinerary of its 50th training cruise, the Chilean Navy tall ship Esmeralda is scheduled to arrive at Naval Station Norfolk May 16. The Argentinean corvette ARA Spiro will also be at the naval station. Esmeralda is set to stay in Norfolk until May 21, when it will set sail for Boston. Because the Argentine training ship ARA Libertad is undergoing an extended period of midlife repairs, Esmeralda has a group of 21 cadets from the Argentinean Naval Academy aboard. While in Norfolk, a relief of a group of Argentine Naval Cadets will be carried out. The new cadets will remain on board until this deployment's end in Valparaíso in August. The group of 21 cadets being relieved participated in the first half of the training cruise, which ends in Norfolk.

In addition to the ports mentioned above, Esmeralda has visited Miami and its itinerary also includes port calls in Ecuador, Panama, Colombia, Brazil and Argentina.

Esmeralda has a crew of 321 men, of which 23 are officers, 75 are midshipmen under training, 55 are sailors under training, 141 are sailors, three are officers from the other Chilean armed forces services, one is a guest officer from the Panamanian Navy, two are instructor officers from the Argentine Navy and 21 are cadets from the Argentine Naval Academy.

The ship has a busy schedule during its stay in Norfolk. After its arrival to Naval Station Norfolk May 16, the relief ceremony of the Argentinean cadets will be held May 17 at 11 a.m. Scheduled to attend the ceremony are the Argentinean and Chilean ambassadors from Washington D.C., and local Navy officials. The ceremony will be followed by a luncheon in honor of the local officials. An evening reception is also planned for special invited guests. On May 18, Esmeralda and Spiro crewmen will lay a wreath on the guided-missile destroyer Cole memorial.

Esmeralda will be open for visitation May 18-20 for military personnel and their families, DOD employees, retirees and authorized personnel with installation access from 2-6 p.m.

The ship's departure is scheduled May 21.

For further information on the ship, including its crew, history, itinerary, news and photo gallery, visit <www.esmeralda.cl> on the Internet.